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1877

POEMS AND
SONGS

By

JAMES M. NEILSON.





Manuscript

1131

To Mr. James Hamilton,
with kindest regards of the author
James M. Neilson

May, 1877.

lacks

new empire

POEMS AND SONGS.



POEMS AND SONGS

CHIEFLY IN

The Scottish Language

BY

JAMES M. NEILSON

"SONG SWEETENS TOIL, HOWEVER RUDE THE SOUND"

GLASGOW
MARR, DOWNIE & CO., 29 EAST INGRAM ST.
1877.

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TO THE READER.



It is with mingled feelings of hope and fear that I launch this little paper frigate upon the waters of public opinion. While I fear that some may think me rash in trusting so frail a bark to the mercy of the winds, I am not without hope that "calm seas, auspicious gales" are in store for it. I know that many friends will bid me God speed in my venture, but I also know that it is the public alone that can make or mar me; and to them I would say,

"Gentle breath of yours my sails
Must fill, or else my project fails,
Which was to please."

In selecting from my manuscripts the pieces contained in this volume, I have endeavoured to offer as much of a variety as possible, in the hope that pages rejected by some readers, may not be displeasing to others. I have also withheld, with one or two exceptions, all pieces dealing with subjects of merely local interest, and offer a bill of fare that, it is hoped, will be more acceptable to general readers.

I have not attempted to soar into the loftier regions of

the muse, and even in the humbler walk I have chosen, I may be deemed an intruder. Still, there may be some little touch of nature, or some other mark of merit here and there in the book to show that I am not altogether unworthy; and should I only succeed in securing a place within the outer circle of minor Scottish Poets, I shall think that my early efforts have not been fruitless and in vain.

J. M. N.

THORNLIBANK, *December*, 1876.



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POEMS AND SONGS.

THE MAY-DEW GATHERER.

“ ’Tis sweet May morn ; wake drowsy girls !
Come ere the sun has stolen the pearls—
The dewy pearls, that glisten sheen
On May’s soft lap and mantle green.
Come barefoot, come, each little lass,
With crystal dew ’mong flowery grass
Bathe hands and feet till all aglow,
And gaily o’er your shoulders throw
The shining drops ; with dew-filled palm
Lave cheek and brow, ’tis Beauty’s balm.”

—JANET HAMILTON.

I.

“ I’M up with the lark, you see, mother, to-day ;
I’m ready to trip to the hill
With Julia and Sue, my companions in play,
And merry we’ll gather the first dews of May—
We wish to be prettier still ;
And grandmother says, what I’ve heard you say too,
That our cheeks will be rosy when bathed with the dew.”

“And you'll not be angry, I think, mother dear,
If Charley Cray goes with us too ;
He's a brave little lad, and so full of good cheer—
I declare, if it isn't his song now I hear !
Hush, it is he ; how strange that I knew !
He said he'd go with us to usher in May,
But I thought he was joking, and didn't say nay.

“But, mother, before I go, all I must tell—
I cannot my secrecies hide ;
On yesternight, just as the twilight shades fell,
Dear Julia and I went to Merryland Well,
For we knew yarrow grew by its side,
And we each pull'd a sprig of that plant, as you know
'Twas common for maids yesternight to do so.

“Bound homeward, dear mother, we met Charlie Cray
He laughed when he knew where we'd been,
And he turned and came home with me all the long way
But I cannot, in daylight tell all he would say ;
In dark, tho', the blush isn't seen ;
But guess to what purpose our talk would relate,
When I say that he kissed me twice—thrice, at the gate !

“The yarrow I placed 'neath my pillow last night,
And laid myself down on't to dream,
When I dreamt Charlie came in a great flood of light,
And wreathed me with flowers that should never know blight,
Which he cull'd from a poet's theme ;
And gave me a ring which a fairy, he said,
Had woven with sunbeams for his pretty maid.

“But, mother, I’m keeping him waiting too long—
See him lingering still at the gate ;
What cheerfulness, mother, to some folks belong,
He’s singing so sweetly my favourite song,
As the nightingale would to its mate.
I must off now with Charlie and Julia and Sue,
To the green hills and gather the sparkling May-dew.

II.

“I’m come home again, mother—come home now to cry.
I’ve been vexed since I went away ;
The song of the lark, poised in mid-air so high ;
The shout on the hill, and the echo’s reply ;
The welcome the flocks gave to May ;
The merriest cadence the bounding rills sung,
Were ill-tuned with my heart’s harp for gloomy strains
strung.

“The opening flowers seemed not so rich in their dyes,
Their fragrance was sickening to-day ;
The cool balmy zephyrs I ladened with sighs,
The dew on the grass washed the tears from my eyes,
And drowsily time crept away :
Oh ! the falseness of Charlie has made me so ill—
I’m sorry, dear mother, I went to the hill.

“When Charlie got Sue he took no thought to spare
E’en a word for poor Julia and me ;
His absence in presence was ill, ill to bear,
But his cruelty, mother dear, didn’t end there,
For the prettiest flowers he could see
He gathered for Sue, and I knew he was pleased
When he looked at me sometimes and saw I was teased.

“He has gone home with Sue to be merry to-day—
Where you know, mother, I should have been ;
From all the companions invited to play
There’s one to be chosen the Queen of the May—
But Charlie will make her the Queen.
I should like to go just for the sake of dear Sue,
But my heart is so sore since a-gathering dew.

“I never pull’d yarrow before, mother dear,
And am sure I shall never again,
For ’twas then Charlie won this heart truly sincere,
Then in dreams it made glorious falsehoods appear,
And the end of all, mother, is—pain ;
I care not now whether the dew sheds the bloom
Of the rose on my cheek, for my heart’s like a tomb.

“I have one wish I trust may be granted to-night—
’Tis but once to repeat that false dream ;
And when Charlie comes forth in that vision so bright,
I’ll restore him the wreaths that were ne’er to know blight,

Which he cull'd from the poet's theme,
And return him the ring which the fairy, he said,
Had woven with sunbeams for his pretty maid."

III.

But Charlie, indeed, was a brave little man,
For that eve brought him back to the gate
To tell the dew-gatherer 'twas but a plan
Seeming cold to her, almost like hate ;
For knowing that others had offered their love,
He wished but to prove her his own ;
And he, like the Patriarch, found too his dove
'Mid her flood of grief rest had not known.
As pretty a radiance adorned her sweet face
As the sun e'er shed after a storm,
And brighter gems ne'er deck'd the web of love's lace
Than those young hearts so lovingly warm.





JANET HAMILTON, POETESS.

(TO WHICH THE AUTHOR RECEIVED A CHARACTERISTIC
REPLY.)

PRIDE in oorsels is the bane o' promotion,
A bleeze that maun kindle regrets ;
It robs the Creator o' a' due devotion,
For self a' His blessin's forgets.

Pride in oor neebors brings life mair o' pleasure—
It's love in the records o' heaven,
An' love tae the creature extends tae fu' measure
O' thanks for the gifts God has given.

"Auld mither Scotland" is prood o' her dochter
* That sits in her lap at Langloan ;
The minstrel whase numbers sic honours hae brocht her,
The genius whase worth's sae far shone.

Her's is the speech o' true woman's affections
Weel set in phrase masculine, strang ;
Her's are the thochts that create pure reflections ;
Soun' sense is the stamp o' her sang.

Her harp has a chord sairly soaked wi' sorrow ;
 An' ane that can mak the grave gay ;
 A chord for the aged wi' fears for the morrow,
 An' ane for the bairnies at play.

Hoo martial the strains o' her patriot measures ;
 Hoo meet her "memoriams" rin !
 Her imag'ry's fresh as the May-mornin' treasures !
 Her harp's every chord's aye in tune.

Omnipotent Power, bless this bairn o' the heather,
 Mak life tae her Heaven's ain smile ;
 Mak auld age as lichtsome as glad simmer weather
 Tae her sae endear'd ower the Isle.

GRANNIE'S INGLESIDE.

THE craw the hie'est fir may tap,
 The bee the sweetest flowrie seek,
 The thrissle's hame be Scotland's lap,
 The swain may coort the rosy cheek—
 But, ask the bairnies whaur they'd be ;
 What's best ower a' this world wide ?
 They'll haud their flaxen heids fu' hie
 An' shout, " It's grannie's ingleside " !

Whan buskit oot in braw new claes,
Auld grannie's hansel's never miss't ;
Wee feet wi' thorns, an' trampit tae
Are buckl't best whan 'ts her that does't ;
For orra ailments o' the bairns
Her ready skill can sune provide ;
For muckle, muckle grannie learns
Frae first she owns an ingleside.

Whan mither ower them craws sae croose,
An' faither threats tae use the tawse,
A kin' word's aye in grannie's hoose—
Their fortress is their grannie's wa's !
Whan bairns wi' bairns fa' oot at play,
An' on some wee dispute divide,
Auld grannie sowthers't wi' her say—
They're sune made frien's at her fireside.

Whan strings o' stories grannie tells
'Bout giants, witches, ghaists an' a',
That skelpit ower the ferny fells
An' cantrips play'd in castles braw,
Ilk bairnie's face ne'er brichter shone ;
Ilk day frae morn till nicht they'd bide ;
As loyal subjects tae a throne
Are they tae grannie's ingleside,

She counsels them on wrang an' richt,
A guid advice she'll aften gie—
She warns them o' the ills that blicht,
An' pleasures that may end in wae,
For she has kent the warld 'sae lang ;
An' like a tried an' trusty guide
Her counsel has sic wecht amang
The bairns about her ingleside.

But grannie's growin' unco frail
As bairnies grow tae maids an' men ;
The day 's at haun maun tell a tale
On wrinkled threescore years an' ten.
But maids an' men she'll lea' behint
Will count the gowden days wi' pride
They've treasured up in mem'ry's mint—
The days at grannie's ingleside.



FOCK ON EMIGRATION.

GUIDWIFE, dae ye ken what the neebors a' say ?
 It's Queenslan's the kintra we ocht tae gang tae,
 For there we'd get gowd lyin' thick on the shores—
 The waves o' the sea dash it up in galores.
 Nor is't by the sea-side we'd get it alane,
 For the hills there, they tell me's, no biggit wi' stane—
 They're biggit wi' nuggets o' guinea gowd rare :
 Oor fortune we'd mak' in a day or twa there !

The miller wad len' us guid meal pocks eneu'—
 Say maybe a score, for we'll no tak' ower few,—
 Tae haud feck the treasure we'll wale frae the san',
 An' bring it safe hame tae oor ain native lan'.
 We'll then cast oor auld duds o' cleedin' awa,
 Drive oot in oor carriage, hae servants an' a' ;
 We'll rank wi' the hie'est sae gran' an' sae gay—
 Tae Queenslan' ye'll gang, my wee wifie, jist say.

I'm willin' tae work, but the wark's noo sae scarce
 I cou'd sit doon an' greet till wi' greetin' grow hairse,
 For a' the sma' siller I'm able tae mak'
 Can scant gie us brose, let alane cleed oor back.
 Noo, darlin' wee wifie, jist say that ye'll gang,
 We're baith in oor prime, an' the road's no sae lang ;
 The Queen sends her subjects to Queenslan' scart free,
 An' Providence shurely a fair win' will gie.



THE FISHERMAN'S BRIDE.

A FISHERMAN'S bride, with her heart sick and sore—
For the storm of the night she deplored,—
Was wistfully watching alone on the shore
For the boat with her Norman on board.
She long watched in vain for the big snowy sail,
And mingled her sighs with the sea's hollow wail ;
But, youthful and faithful, fond hope could not fail
For the boat with her heart's own on board.
And often she heard like his voice in the air,
To her feverish soul like a spring—
"No treasure of ocean, no fishing we bear,
But a brave and a true heart we bring."

A glad sun at noon poured its light o'er the land ;
From the cliffs where the wild goatlings strayed
A shadow was thrown o'er the bay's silvery sand,
And she sat down to mourn in the shade.
'Twas meet she should sorrow, tho' hope had not fled ;
And nature her kindest sympathy shed
In shadows flung over the bride's aching head,
And her young heart with trial dismayed.
Yet often she heard like his voice in the air,
To her feverish soul like a spring—
"No treasure of ocean, no fishing we bear,
But a brave and a true heart we bring."

She, lingering, watched till the sun braved the west
In a cloud-car of crimson and gold,
Till shadows that veiled o'er the bay's shining breast
Had been chased o'er the wood and the wold.
But heart-ache had fled with her shadowy veil,
For, safe from the fury and swell of the gale,
Came nearing the shore with a storm-tattered sail
The good boat with her fisherman bold.
Rejoicing, she heard like his voice in the air ;
To her feverish soul like a spring—
"No treasure of ocean, no fishing we bear,
But a brave and a true heart we bring."

Few tides ebb'd and flow'd till the table was spread,
And the parson made bride and groom one :
If Norman had come from the land of the dead,
Not an hour could have happier run.
But ever thro' wedlock the fisherman's wife,
When waken'd at night by the wind's wanton strife,
Lay trembling for fear of her Norman's dear life,
And was out on the watch with the sun,
And fancied she heard like his voice in the air,
To her feverish soul like a spring—
"No treasure of ocean, no fishing we bear,
But a brave and a true heart we bring."





THE HIELAN' ORPHAN'S STORY.

SANCE had a happy bit hame,
A cottie built oot on a muir—
No big, nor sae braw, sirs,
As hames ye hae a', sirs,
But gowden contentment was there.
Ay, an' twas up in the Hielan's,
Whaur Royalty hasna' a knave ;
Whaur thrissles an' heather
Are growin' thro'-ither—
The lan' that gies birth tae the brave !

Whan winter cam' stormy an' snell,
Wi' hoary mists silverin' a' ;
Whan burnies, ance ringin',
Were hush't, an' a' hingin'
Wi' jewels, or hid 'mang the snaw ;
Whan the face o' the warl' was chang't,
An' simmer's joys chased frae the muir,
I ne'er fan' the cauld, sirs,
Sae cheerie an' bauld, sirs,
Bleez't the fire on the auld cottie floor.

My faither, wha'd aye been a herd,
Gaed aff tae the hills in the morn,
Returnin' at e'enin',
As gloamin' was wanin',
Tae rest frae the toils he had borne.
Tae a stane by a wee siller burn
I toddl't, an' sat till he cam' ;
His lang crook I'd carry,
An' danced like a fairy,
An' I was his ain blithsome lam'.

My mither was aye keepit thrang,
An' meikle sair wark she'd tae dae :
The pushin' bit body,
Wi' wee thochts o' study,
Could fin' thro' a' hardships a way.
An' at e'en, whan my faither cam' hame,
On her creepie she sat at her wheel—
The cottie an' byre clean,
Hersel' like a new preen,
An' a' things sae cosie an' weel.

But Time brocht a sad change aboot
Nae faither nor mither I've noo :
They've baith gane awa', sirs,
Tae whaur we're gaun a', sirs—
The grave that'll never be fu'.

They're baith sleepin' soun' in the muir,
An' close tae the cottie they lo'ed ;
 An' see in my bosie
 This dear wither't posie—
Some bluebells I frae their grave pu'd.

O, the warl's sad, sad tae me noo ;
I've nae hame I daur ca' my ain—
 Nae ruiff 'neath the sun, sirs,
 Whan needfu' tae shun, sirs,
The winter's cauld blast, nor its rain ;
Nae rowsin' peat fire on the floor
Tae sit by an birsle my taes ;
 Baith humble an' spairin',
 Atweel, is my fairin',
An' tatter't an' scanty my claes.

But yet, tho' I wander an orphan,
An outcast, in spirit depress't,
 Wi' dark cluds abune me,
 Ae thocht bides within me—
It's maybe a' meant for the best ;
For Guid aften tries fouk fu' sair,
Tae learn them on Him to depend :
 The day's maybe near, sirs,
 Whan aiblins ye'll hear, sirs,
Hoo hard times began tae amend.

But wha hae their hame an' their freens,
Their dainties, their gowd, an' their gear,
 Forgetna' a new day
 Micht turn yer coorse doon-brae,
An' dim merry een wi' a tear.
An' mindfu' that sic micht befa',
If e'en ye hae nocht else tae gie,
 Ae kind word's a treasure
 That cheers in a measure
A' puir orphan wan'ers like me.





TIME IS EVER ON THE WING.

SPRING, renewéd youth of Nature,
Summer, clothed in brilliant bloom,
Fruitful Autumn, ripe and mellow,
Winter's gloom o'er Nature's tomb,
Coming, going, in succession,
To the memory must bring
That one truth which must remind us
Time is ever on the wing.

Hamlets home by home extending,
Mansions hastening to decay ;
Prattling infants grown to manhood,
Manhood's vigour passed away,
Leaving grey hairs even scanty,
Oft the crutch a needful thing,
Cannot but remind the blindest
Time is ever on the wing.

Wheresoever we may journey,
Mounds are found that lodge the dead,
Where we find the good and wicked—
Sister, son, and family head ;
Rich and poor at rest together
'Neath the same cold covering—
Truth that breathes in solemn silence—
Time is ever on the wing.

Daily comes another dawning,
Luna's born each month anew,
Clouds on stayless winds keep floating,
Transient is the silvery dew ;
Tiny wavelets, giant billows,
Streams that in their channels ring,
Ever restless, are proclaiming
Time is ever on the wing.

Since above, beneath, around us,
Teach this lesson worth to learn,
Then should progress in well'-doing
Be to us our chief concern—
Progress that brings no reflections
When Time spreads our dying bed—
Progress that shall leave behind us
Memories of a life well lead.





SILLER.

SILLER comes an' siller gangs—
A fickle freen tae a';
It's easy ware't, whiles ill tae spare't,
An' aften dreich tae draw.
An' some hae routh tae spen' an' hain,
But yet are no content ;
While some hae faucht tae keep things straucht
On scanty siller sent.

It's siller spins an' siller weaves,
An' siller saws an' reaps ;
t's siller cleeds an' siller feeds,
An' brawlie bien hames keeps :
But genius ne'er frae siller sprung,
Inventin' reel an' loom ;
Tak' Nature's han' oot frae the lan',
Oor barns wad sune be toom.

Then, siller-mak's some college-bred,
An' crams some heids wi' lear ;
An' whiles beside fills hearts wi' pride
That stings the modest sair.
An' siller has made mony fules,
Some ruin't in a trice ;
But siller ne'er, in ony sphere,
Made onybody wise.

O, siller hides a heap o' fauts,
An' siller buys respec' ;
But wealth or name can ne'er reclaim
Wha's morally a wreck.
An' siller ne'er did much tae soothe
Whan sickness warr'd wi' faith ;
An' what is wealth if wantin' health ?
It canna buy ower Death.

O, siller comes an' siller gangs—
A fickle freen, nae doot ;
It's evil's root. Ill daein' wi't,
But waur tae dae without.
An' tho' it's ill divided ower,
An' tho' oor share be sma',
Gude grant us sense tae save oor pence,
Or pounds may flee awa.





JOHNNIE AT HIS LESSON.

JOHNNIE, hae ye learnt yer lesson?
Come an let me hear't;
Man, sic dourness is oppressin'—
Hoo are ye sae sweer't?
Book lost! Dinna say ye've lost it;
Here it's in my han',
Jist the same's a bull had toss't it—
Only ain could stan'.

Dinna look sae sour an' heart-fu',
Stan' beside my knee;
Dicht yer nose, man, an' be smart, noo—
Noo, say after me:
L, O—lo. Ye little dodger,
Never mind the flees;
Jist be like a red-coat sodger—
Try an' stan' at ease.

L, O—lo. Noo, watch my finger.
G, O—go. What's wrang?
Listenin' tae a puir street-singer—
Fegs, *ye'll* sing a sang.
Yes, John, that's it tae a letter—
G, O—go. That's richt!
Bairns an' big folk baith are better
Whiles tae get a fricht.

Then comes S, O—so. Ou, ay, man,
I'll buy John the mune;
But yer lesson first come try, man—
We are nearly dune.
S, O—so. Noo, what is't ails ye?
Weel, ye'll get "a piece."
Johnnie, patience nearly fails me—
Aye yer wants increase.

Think ye that yer finger's candy?
Oot yer mooth wi't, brat!
Noo, then: N, O—no. Ay, randy,
Fine ye can say that.
Mither says ye'll yet be clever—
Weel, sae may it be;
Ye're but startin' on life's river—
May we live tae see.





THE FREE KIRK WEATHER-COCK.

LENNOXTOWN.

FOR Free Kirk neebors wish't tae gether
Some knowledge o' the comin' weather,
Sae they a cock in gorgeous feather,
A' shinin' bricht,
Richt proodly tae their spire did tether,
Up sic a heicht.

For twa-three weeks his wark he'd dune,
An' wi' ilk gentle breeze o' win
He'd whurl aboot on his ae pin
Wi' a' his heart ;
But ere lang did he change his tune,
An' wi' them pairt.

His beauty, glitterin' wi' the sun,
Had mony a nēebor's hen's heart won,
Whilk made them roun' the kirk tae rin
Wi' kecklin' cry,
Tae coax him doun tae join their fun,
Whilk he'd fain try.

But as he'd nae wish tae displease
His Free Kirk friens, he'd tak' his ease
An' slip amang them by degrees—

 He bit by bit
Wad cowp afore ilk stiffer breeze,
 His mark tae hit.

The first croose day blew him alee—
A gey guid start, thocht he, thocht we ;
Anither cam': noo nearly free,

 He crooch't him doon,
In watchfu' readiness tae flee
 Whan hens cam' roun'.

He stupit grew as love increas't,
In wastlin' win' he lookit east,
Nor ony win' he'd ever breest—
 Convincin' folk,
Love turns the heid o' man an' beast,
 An' weather-cock.

Ae day a favourin' breeze did blaw ;
His dearies cam'—he loup'd the wa',
But sic a smash made wi' his fa'
 That a' the hens
Wi' fricht took soople heels awa
 Tae their hen-pens.

Ill-fated bird o' heich-born breed !
He lay as still as he was deid,
Till kind folk saw some help he'd need,
 An' took him in,
Tae buckle up wi' gracious heed
 His broken pin.

Noo, friens, frae this a lesson tak'—
If e'er a weather-cock ye lack,
Jist set a hen ahint his back,
 He'll whurl content,
An' no come doon wi' sic a crack,
 Tae cause comment.

THIS gentleman o' brazen breed
Has been a feck o' twalmonths deid :
An' sin' he's maist gane oot o' heid,
 Wha likes may daff,
We'll gie him what's a common meed—
 An Epitaph !

" A mould o' *mettle* lies herein,
Sae sairly fash't wi' love an' *win'*
His *understandin'* 'gan tae fin'
 Its weakness sair,
An' he fell *fouly* frae abune—
 Aspir'd nae mair.

“Ye passers-by, on Union bent,
Let fa’ a tear for this *dissent*;
An’ wha’s for Kirk Establishment
Gie nae applause,
Lest future “Acts” tae ye present
Some wicked *caws*.”

LITTLE HOPEFUL JIM.

“**I** WISH that I were big, papa;
O, if I were a man,”
Said little hopeful Jim, as down
His round cheeks kind tears ran.

“I wish that I were big, papa;
How happy we should be,
For I should work so hard all day,
And frighten poverty!

“You ne’er should mourn so sore, papa,
If business haply failed,
Nor dread as now to be so soon
By creditors assailed.

“And dear mamma should never need
To think so long and plan
O'er how she'd spend a shilling best,
If I were once a man.”

“You wish you were a man, my child ;
And, being big and strong,
You think that life would run so smooth,
And nothing happen wrong ?

“Ah, child, there's not a man been born
Who has not had his share
Of fickle Fortune's saucy frowns,
Of sorrow and of care.

“'Twas but the other day, was't not,
I saw you at the gate,
With soapy water in a pipe,
Your bell balloons inflate ?”

“I do remember, it, papa—
The biggest I had blown
I called you quick to come and see,
But ere you came, 'twas gone.”

“Yes, true, my child. Well, thus it is
Through life with ev'n a man—
Too oft it proves a bubble frail
His fair and honest plan.

"I'd like to teach you this, my child—
Ne'er on *your* strength depend—
Against Almighty God's good will
A world can not defend."





THE BAIRNIE'S BIRTH REGISTRATION.

WHA hae never seen a bogle
Maun hae lived a canny life ;
Fricht's made some a perfec' trogle,
Wuts an' nerves, an' wull at strife.

No that I'd hae ye believin'
In the like o' witch or ghaist ;
But there's some, their een deceivin',
Whiles hae catch't auld Cloutie maist.

I mysel', in sober senses,
Gat a fricht I'll ne'er forget ;
Listen, wi' my sma' pretences,
I'll the tale afore ye set.

Janet had her firstlin' baby,
In September cam' he hame ;
We agree't tae ca' him Rabbie—
I'd of coorse the pick o' name.

Weel, time cam' for Registration ;
I'd tae trudge twa miles a-gait
Tae the lim' o' that legation,
Never dreamin' sic a fate.

Scantly had the name been beukit,
Floods o' lichtnin' fill't the hoose ;
Rowin' thun'ers sairly sheuk it—
Fearfu' Furies quite let loose !

Thinkin' o' my wife an' bairnie,
I'd be aff an' brave it hame,
Whan the beuk-worm taen tae warn me
O' the folly, I thocht shame.

“ Bide content, an' gie's yer crack, man,
Nae fear's in sae young a life ;
Janet's safe till ye gang back, man :
Hae ye sic a ginge-breed wife ? ”

Sae we sat, an' crack't, an' smokit,
Till the night hid fell an' fiel',
An' the thun'er only bockit,
Ha'ein' toom't its stomach weel.

Then at last for hame I startit ;
Sick a dark nicht ne'er was seen,
But sic squibs o' lichtnin' dartit,
Scaumin' blin' my glowerin' een.

Thro' the clachan scarce a can'le
Lichtit up the winnocks wee ;
Kirkton Burn, thro' rocky channel,
Burden't nicht sae eerilie ;

Hoolets held the auld kirk ruin,
Screighin' ower a thoosan' graves—
Sic a nicht o' Nick's ain brewin
Nane but nerve the teuchest braves.

In the darkness, just by chance like,
Stauchrin' did I haud awa,
Till I, rattlin' on the manse dyke,
Nearly brak my heid in twa.

Doun the dyke-side I gaed feelin',
Then the hedge the glebe alang,
Cautious, jist as I'd been stealin',
I'd gat sic an awfu' bang.

Haudin' hame, the lichtnin's canter
Ower abune the Hauch-head brig,
Made me think on Tam o'Shanter
An' the witches playin' tig.

Thro' ablow ilk spreadin' beech-tree,
Nearin' noo Balcurrach dam,
Fa' o' horse's feet did reach me—
Trottin', trottin', nearer cam'.

Aye the soun' cam' nearer, nearer—
Horse nor rider could I see ;
'Od, I ne'er afore fan' queerer—
Flashes mair, mair bleer't my e'e !

Close I crooch't in tae the roadside,
Thocht tae let the trotter by—
There I fear't tae get a broadside,
Thocht the ither side tae try.

Aye the feet cam' nearer, nearer—
Every hair stood up on en' ;
Wife an' bairn were ten times dearer—
Hoo I wish't for hame again !

I frae side tae side ran jinkin',
Till the feet-fa' fainter grew ;
No safe yet—as I was thinkin',
Trottin' nearer starts anew !

Syne the trottin' chang't tae prancin'—
Horse nor rider yet I saw ;
For a while kept jinkin', dancin'—
Then the prancin' stop't an' a'.

Was this bodin' guid or evil ?
Was it sic a thing's a neg ?
Was't the hard cluits o' the deevil ?
Ghaist o' Shanter an' his Meg ?

What it micht be, 'od I kentna :
On my gate again I set,
Safely, gladly hameward bentna,
Till jist past Balcurnach yett.

Hech ! but there a big white fig're
Richt along the road did squat,
Wi' its arms outstretch't, an' bigger
Than sax sturdy men, I wat.

"Hech, sirs ! hech, sirs !" I said, braithless,
"Fate decrees my doom this nicht ;
I can ne'er get 'yont thee scaithless—
Thou maun be sax times my micht.

"But if I get jist roun' by thee,
I'll tak' care my stappin's clear ;
'Gin thou chase, my faith, I'll try thee—
I've gat wife an' bairnie dear !"

Creepin' roun' the ghaist's braid shooother,
Tae the hedge I stuck sae close
That, whan startin' aff like poother,
Pooch an' birth extract did loss.

Jist a wee bit gat I frae it
Whan a voice speers, "Wha comes there?"
Courage fail't me—wae tae say it,
I'd tae stan'—could dae nae mair.

"Will ye catch my horse's bridle?"
Said the voice. I thoct a wee :
Then fu' canny up I sidle,
An' the minister I see.

He'd been trottin' ower the same bit
O' the road fore'er sae lang ;
An' the beast—he sadly blam't it—
Past that place it wadna gang.

E'en the parson's horse was frichtit
For that fig're streetch't oot there ;
But I said I'd see it richtit—
Roun' the ghaist I led the mare.

Sune as by't the mare gaed fleein',
Leavin' me again tae Fate,
But determin't noo on seein'
What it was, be't sune or late.

I'd been wi' the parish rector !
I taen courage 'maist divine
Thinkin' on the Bible pict're—
Dauvit an' the Philistine.

Sae I stepp't ower tae accost it,
Stood whan I thocht very near't,
Whan a flash o' lichtnin' cross't it,
Leavin' me sae awfu' bleer't.

Still, the sense was left o' feelin',
On't my han' I tried tae place,
Whan a rant o' thun'er reelin'
Sent me startl't on my face.

Richt across't I tum'let, gropin',
Slimy, slipp'ry was the sprawl ;
Somethin' in my mou' wide open
Squirtit, kin' o' soor an' caul.

Up I startit—hame I peltit—
Never haltit ance again ;
Sweatin' as if I'd hae meltit,
Met the face o' wife an' wean.

A' besmear't wi' that foul fig're,
Guid claes spoil't I sair bewail't ;
Janet flew up like a tiger—
"Twas soor milk some cairter skail't !

"Nae mair weans," quo' I, "my wife, hae,
Registrin' brocht what's befell ;"
But she plagued my chequer'd life wi'—
• "I'se record the rest mysel'."





THE BIGGIN' ON THE BRAE.

WHAN winter's onfa's frichtfu', an its blasts blaw snell
an' croose,
By-or'ner looks o' comfort's 'bout the uplan' theekit
hoose ;

Whan simmer comes sae merry wi' its trappin's bricht an' gay,
The brichtest, gayest hame o' a's the biggin' on the brae.

There's freedom in the muir-cock's cry an' in the burnie's
din ;

There's beauty in the purple heath an' in the gowden whin ;
There's grandeur in the rocky steep wi' lichens siller't grey,
An' pleasure in their midst within the biggin' on the brae.

There's aye the lade o' guid aitmeal, the heap o' aiten cakes
The coggie fu' o' crummie's milk sae rich wi' 'reamy flakes ;
There's aye a bienness an' content in cozie hodden-grey—
There's airs o' independence 'bout the biggin' on the brae.

Wha e'er has seen the lass that comes frae sic a hame as this,
That hasna gat ripe cherry cheeks an' lowin' lips tae kiss,
A heart sae leal, a gait sae trig, a limb nae winnel-strae—
Ha, ha ! there's somethin' rare about the biggin' on the brae.

Whan fulish enemies wad fain invade auld Scotia's isle,
Gae, gether oot the hill-bred sons an' set them rank an' file :
The healthy, sturdy, stalwart chieels their game will brawly
play
For Queen, for country, ay, an' for their biggin' on the brae.

A groat for a' the lordly ha's that stud oor native lan',
A fig for a' the walth an' gear oor lordlin's hae at han' ;
We're no withoot ambition, tho', for honestly we'd hae
A hame like what we sing about—a biggin' on a brae.

THE DAYS OF YORE.

THE sorrows in our course of life
With shadows dim our lot,
As clouds that cross the summer sun
May shade earth's fairest spot ;
And so it was in days gone bye,
But clouds seem'd lighter then—
In thought we cling to childhood yet,
Tho' Time will have us men.
The sorrows of our early years,
Now softened into dreams,
Look not so dark on memory's waste,
'Mid memory's brighter beams.

The scenes of former years we see
Like dawn thro' winter hoar ;
Like heart-sore exiles we behold
The past—the distant shore,
With happy childhood's hallowed haunts
Around our sunny home—
The woods, the glens, the fields, the fells
Where lovers we might roam.
Those sacred scenes of bygone years,
Now softened into dreams,
Are each a gem on memory's waste
Reflecting morning beams.

Our absent friends return, in thought,
O'er seas and lapse of years ;
The sleeping dead wake, smile again,
And wipe away our tears.
And we with them, in buoyant youth,
To days that are no more,
Fall back in memory to live
The happy days of yore.
The friendships of our bygone years
Appear to us in dreams,
And gently flit o'er memory's waste
Like sunset's farewell beams.





THE CANDYMAN'S STAN'.

TIMES are set for observance by Kirk an' by State
That are scarcely sae honour't, I'm sorry tae say't,
As the day I come hame wi' my pay frae the mill—
That's the day o' a' days, say the least, tae oor Will.
There are fouk wha gae aff tae the markets an' fairs,
An' lay oot their wee fortunes on a' kinds o' wares ;
Nae sae hie is Will's rank—wi' a maik in his haun,
He gangs business-like wi't tae the candyman's stan'.

It's as shure as the pay-day comes, there comes the man,
Wi' his bull's-eyes, an' candy in sticks a lang span ;
An' as sune as the schule skails oor Will skelters hame
For his bawbee, on whilk he has shurely a claim,—
For he's oot in the mornin's, an' a' the street redds
O' the kye an' horse-drappin's for oor ingin' beds ;
An' ye'd think that his faither has hooes an' lan'
As he struts proodly back tae the candyman's stan'.

Gin his mither aye settles wi' Rab in the store
For oor tauties an' meal, she gets sweeties galore ;
An' she's fain tae get Will tae buy oot o' her pock,
But he kens he aye gets them—Will's no sic' a gowk.

At the schule he's in coontin', an' writin', an' a',
Fills a copy a-week, an' whiles three in the twa;
But I doot its no dune for improvin' his haun—
For auld copies are taen at the candyman's stan'.

'Twas ae pay-day his auntie, a leddie sae braw,
Cam' doon frae the neist toon tae gie us a ca',
Whan oor Will join't her oot on the street an' cam' hame,
An' his mither an' me put tae black burnin' shame;
For his face was a' black-jock, his feet were a' glaur—
O, but what 'twas affrontit us fifty times waur?
On his auntie's silk gown, whilk he held in his haun,
Was the clatty tredd-mark o' the candyman's stan'.

But there's somethin' guid in him, tae, worthy o' heed:
There's wee Sandy MacMurray, wha's faither's short deid,
Wha gets ne'er noo a bawbee on pay-days tae spen',
And wha ither schule-bairns seem despisin' sin' then;
Od, oor Will has stuck tae him, while they've turn't their
back,

Sae a noble Freemason, I think, Will may mak'.
Puir wee Sandy shares a' whilk wi' Will may be gaun,
Frae the treacle mak'-up on the candyman's stan'.





ROBIN AFFLECK AND THE PHRENOLOGIST.

(POETICAL RENDERING FROM "THE DISRUPTION.")

AHANTLE o' years since, advised by a frien',
Gaed Robin Affleck, a young gallant, but green,
Tae a lady phrenologist, famed in her line,
Expectin' she'd spae in his heid quite a mine
O' qualifications befitin' the bar—
Had he jist been born 'neath some fortunate star ;
An' gin she'd the talents an' patience tae read,
Faith, Robin Affleck had his ain share o' heid.

He tirl't at the door, an' was shown tae a room
Sae splendidly furnish'd, an' fu' o' perfume ;
An' left for a while wi' a pale-faced array
O' poets, philosophers, criminals tae,
A' cuisten in pipe-clay, as Robin had thocht,
But no a heid 'mang them for size pairt worth oucht.
He stood an' look'd roun' on his company queer,
Then cover'd the bald pow o' Willie Shakspeare
Wi's big blue Kilmarnock ; but jist like a seck
It hung in the sheuch o' the dramatist's neck.
"Puir sawl, man," said Robin, "ye've nae heid ava',
My bannet wad haud ye, suppose ye were twa."

The lady phrenologist enter'd at last,
A chiel tae tak' notes for her followin' fast.
She curtsey'd tae Robin ; but Robin seem'd taen,
An' ne'er spak' a word ; sae she curtsey'd again,
An' said, "I presume, sir, you're wishing a chart
Of your phreno-developments. Why do you start?"
"I'm no very shure, mum," did Robin compleen ;
"But if it be oucht o' the Charter ye mean,
At ance I may say I'm nae Chartist ava'—
I'm wantin' my bumps read, sae jist ca' awa' ;
It's no every day ye've the honour tae read
What's hidden in sic a guid lump o' a heid."

The lady advanced near tae Robin, an' took
A closer survey o' his general look,
An' said, wi' a face o' sic serious intent—
"Sir, Sanguine-Fibrous is your temperament,"
Requestin' the clerk tae put "Sanguine down 'five,'
And Fibrous down 'four.'" "Guidness gracious alive!"
Exclaimed honest Robin ; "Ere spoilin' yer pen
Wi' spellin' sic words, it's but richt ye sud ken
I kent aye a *temper* I had o' my ain ;
But, mistress, ye'll jist be as guid's tae explain
Hoo ye can mak' oot I hae gotten hale nine—
First 'five,' an' then 'four' o' a different kin'."
The lady endeavour'd to stracht his mistak',
But micht hae preach'd on till their faces were black,
For Robin defied a' her powers o' comment,
An' argued that *temper* was temperament.

"Reflecting developments—Flat, as a rule ;
 These organs you certainly have not as full,
 I am sorry to say, as your faculties are
 'Of knowing, observing——." "Noo, don't gang ower far,"
 Cried Robin, wi' pride. "Noo, ye're catch'd in a faut :
 An *organ* in my heid ! come, wha's in tae ca't ?
 I was ne'er hypochond'ric eneuch tae believe
 The likes in my heid—dinna try tae deceive."
 "You misunderstand me. I don't mean those same
 Grand musical instruments known by that name.
 The simple term 'organs,' I beg to explain,
 Phrenologists give distinct parts of the brain."
 "Ou, ay, ay ; or whussles ye maybe micht ca'
 Them rather than *organs*." Weel, jist say awa."

Her ladyship fan' roun' the back o' his heid—
 "I find in the Basilar region, indeed,
 You're remarkably full." This pleased Robin weel :—
 "Odds, mistress," said he, "I'm a country-bred chiel
 But jist as an *ashilar* region ye name,
 There canna be oucht there tae mak' ane think shame
 For gavels an' back wa's o' hooses are a'
 Wi' rubble wark built, while the front, tae be braw
 An' guid, is what masons ca' *ashilar* wark—
 An' *ashilar* bumps maun be up tae the mark."
 "You don't seem to comprehend what's meant again :
 The *Basilar* region is part of the brain,
 The lower back portion, and is, sir, the seat
 Of the animal tendencies." Up tae his feet
 Sprang Robin, fu' angry :—"Eh, what is't ye say ?

There's nae beasts in my heid this mony a day."
 "Not that ; but *propensities, feelings* possessed
 By both men and animals—please be at rest."
 "Ou, ay ; weel, I daursay ye're richt. I'm aware,
 Whan straikeit the contrary way o' the hair,
 A bit o' the cuddy I carena tae show.
 But what mak' ye oot o' these animal pro—
 Pro—. What dae ye ca' them?" "Propensities." "Ay."

"In Amativeness you're exceedingly high.
 I'm sure, sir, that you'll be most warmly attach'd
 To the fair sex. In this you can seldom be match'd."
 "Ye're aff yer eggs there, mistress. Barin' Jean Broon,
 The hale o' the women frae this burgh toon
 Tae ancient Jerusalem, suppose I was free,
 Are no worth a smoke o' tobacco tae me.
 I've promised tae marry Jean at the neist term,
 Tho' Mysie M'Sorrow's tried weel tae brew harm
 In tellin' the lassie that, gin she wad gie
 Me my meat an' my claes, little profit she'd hae.
 But these are baith fouk that ye never hae seen—
 Odds, mistress, I'd fain introduce ye tae Jean ;
 She'd tell ye hersel' I was aye the true blue,
 Tho' ye sud maintain that the love-bump's sae fu'."
 She then tell't his clerkship tae put doon "seventeen :"
 Puir Robin look'd a' ways wi' baith mooth an' een.
 "Man, mistress !—excuse me. Ye don't mean tae say
 I'm coortin' *seventeen*, whan Jean Broon's a' I hae?"
 "Oh, certainly not, sir. The figures denote
 The relative size of the organs you've got."

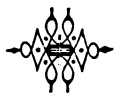
"O, weel; that's a' richt; that's a different thing."
He fan' a' his pooches. "Odds, whar's that bit string?
'Twas the size o' my heid in the month o' July,
That I taen tae M'Hatt's that new bannet tae buy.
I'm sorry it's lost. It's jist takin' time up,
Whan ye micht gat the size o' them a' in a whup."

"Concentrativeness: in a lesser degree."
"Weel, mistress, that's jist Greek an' Latin tae me."
"Adhesiveness small. Put these down at 'sixteen'."
"Saxteen, did ye say? Odds, I'd thocht that a wheen.
I reckon the difference aboot them is sma',
At least, for my pairt, I can see na ata'
The use o' sae mony o' they odds an en's
In ony ane's heid, if yer ladyship kens."

"Destructiveness: over the average size."
"Weel, what dae ye say oot o' that micht arise?"
"Strong feelings, indeed, of resentment; besides
A disposal to crush when a difference divides.
Even something of cruelty might from this spring,
If Benevolence plucks not out cruelty's sting."
"Benevolence! Fegs, I hae plenty o' that;
But cruelty, never the blame o't I gat,
Tho' maybe I've been tae my neebors as kin'
As blude them a horse, kill't their kye or their swine."
"Your conspicuous Destructiveness with such a small
Appearance of love of life might some appal.
This might in some moment, when hope was denied,
Constrain you to meet death—a poor suicide."

"What, *me*? I'm no jist lang eneuch in the lug,
I wadna commit suicide on a dog."

"Now, next comes Combativeness. Fullest I've seen.
Exceedingly large. Put it down at 'eighteen.'"
"What's Combativeness for?" Robin bauldly inquired.
"Good sir, by this organ is courage inspired—
This quality makes a man foremost in fight."
"I thoct ye'd say that. But we're no agreed quite :
For fechtin', I'm shure, mair depends on big nieves
An' shooters sae braid. Faith, the Queen this believes,
Or sodgers, a' sworn tae mak' fechtin' their tredd,
Wad hae ere she'd list them their cranums weel read.
Tho' tuips hae a desperate pow'r in their heid,
Ye'll min' that its no a tuip's bumps that ye read.
But stop noo. I'm thinkin' ye needna dae mair ;
I've gotten as muckle's I'll carry, I'm shure.
Jist tell me hoo far I hae ran in yer debt,
An' I'll sune be stappin' ayont tae Parkyett."
"One shilling's my fee." "Ay, tae spae a hale heid,
But in my case I'd say that was doonrichteous greed.
Ye ken ye've been scant ower the lugs yet wi' mine,
An' shurely fair-dealing's a thoct in yer line.
There's saxpence," said Robin ; an' gin I come back,
We'll maybe agree tae complete the contrac'."





GRANDFAATHER'S KNEE.

BY the ingle auld grandfather's sittin',
His nichtcap drawn ower his bauld pow ;
'Mang his scant locks Time's frost's gat a footin'
That Death's breath alane noo can thow.
Like a licht 'mang the mist o' the mornin',
Subdued is the flash o' his e'e ;
But his heart dings ower age an' ilk warnin'
Tae get at the bairns roun' his knee.

Whan the bairns leave their play 'mang the heather,
Leave paidlin' the mossy broon burn,
Wi' the blume on their cheeks they there gether,
Tae grandfather's kneeth they return ;
An' like clusters o' ripe fruit they swing on't—
Richt glad is the auld vintner's soul,
An' he fin'sna the burden they bring on't,
For love mak's him stronger tae thole.

While their faithers may rival sae keenly
For honours in Kirk or in State,
There's a rivalry scarcely mair freen'ly
'Mang bairns for their favourite seat ;

For grandfather's haun's a croon kin'ly,
Like royalty's robe's his embrace :
Wi' his knee for a throne, 'maist divinely
True happiness brichtens ilk face.

On the ae day, wi' grandfather's bawbee,
They're listed intae the Dragoons,
An' they've mounted his knee an' awa', see,
Tae ride thro' the enemy's touns.
On the neist day they join the blue jackets—
The *Black Prince* gaes reddin' the sea,
But they're safe aye frae rifles an' rackets—
A queer place is grandfather's knee.

There they're schul't in the gaits they sud gang in,
Whar thorns will be fewer tae fash ;
An' for fear they dae oucht there is wrang in,
They're ne'er tae dae onythin' rash.
It's their altar—the Holy Beuk's spread on't,
He reads aboot ilk Bible bairn ;
An' their wee heids sae flaxen are laid on't,
Their earliest prayer tae learn.

But, ochone for the dool they've been hearin',
Their wee hearts blude sair wi' the stang—
He has told them the nicht-fa' is nearin',
His day wi' them canna be lang.

Ower ilk rosy cheek Sorrow's dew's dreepin',
 Gude's haun in't they canna yet see ;
 An' they sech loud an' lang till they're sleepin'
 Their sairs hale on grandfaither's knee.

HAVE WE PARTED FOR EVER?

 YEAR has for ever gone into the past
 Since I parted with her I held dearest ;
 The shadows that then o'er my heaven were cast
 Are the shadows that still haunt me nearest.
 We meet, we make friendship, which ripens to love—
 We love, we grow cold, and we sever—
 Are but the quaint changes the lovers' lot prove,
 Then we doubt if we thus part for ever.

I think on the night when our love was first told
 In the bower, in the garden, in moonlight—
 We feared not the storm which blew boist'rous and bold,
 With our hearts warm, and hope as the noon bright.

We spoke of those fears which are kindred of love,
But we pledged ourselves honest—that never
Should aught cross our path ere the heavens should remove ;
Can I think, then, we've parted for ever?

I think on the time that seems now far away,
When we last bade adieu to each other :
From limit to limit looked wintry and grey—
Languid Nature, indeed, seemed our mother,
For coldly we parted, though long ere the morn
We'd be severed by mountain and river ;
But truly with each was a heavy heart borne,
And I'll ne'er think we parted for ever.





I ANCE LO'ED A LADDIE.

I ANCE lo'ed a laddie, an' thocht him my ain,
An' mony's the courtin' an' cuddlin' we've haen ;
He kiss'd me a hunner times aye whan we met,
Sic dear names he ca'd me I canna forget ;
But, oh ! tae Auld Reekie my laddie is gane,
An' here, a' begratten, he's left me my lane.
But why should I murmur ? far waur nicht befa',
For his was a fause heart that's better awa'.
Ay, why should I murmur ? far waur nicht befa',
For his was a fause heart that's better awa.

My lad was my mither's tae e'e, ye maun ken ;
He on the lang winter nichts cheered oor fire-en',
An' scarce could get risin' whan ance sitten down—
A mair thocht-o' chiel ye'd na gat roun' an' roun'.
But noo, by the ingle whar he sae aft sat,
There's nae ane tae cheer sae, tae join in oor chat.
But why should I murmur ? far waur nicht befa' ;
My mither aye says that he's better awa'.
But why should I murmur ? far waur nicht befa' ;
My mither aye says that he's better awa'.

I look'd tae the future again an' again,
Tae whan we micht hae a bit hoose o' oor ain,
An' loupit wi' joy at hoo happy we'd be,
But noo I maun sit wi' the tear in my e'e;
For whan tae Auld Reekie my laddie had gane,
He sune gat anither, an' made her his ain.
But why should I murmur? far waur micht befa';
Baith him an' his fause heart are better awa'.
Then why should I murmur? far waur micht befa';
Baith him an' his fause heart are better awa'.

I winna sit sabbin' as lang as I've dune—
I'll dry up my tears, gie my grief tae the win;
Oh, why should I let it embitter my life
As lang's there's a chiel' in the toun wants a wife?
'Tae me a dear laddie will cast up ere lang,
Sae here let me end my lament wi' my sang.
I'll never mair murmur—far waur micht befa',
An' aye maun be thankfu' his fause heart's awa';
Na, I'll na mair murmur—far waur micht befa',
An' oh, may sic fauseness be keepit awa'.





SLEEKIT AN' SLY AT THE DRINKIN'.

TWA cronies forgather'd ae day—
Ance striplings thegither sae happy,
An' since they were noo growin' grey,
They'd renew their youth ower a bit drappie.

O, sleekit an' sly are we,
We're sleekit an' sly at the drinkin';
Frae a' a guid name in oor e'e,
But aye tae the deil keepin' winkin'.

Admitted by Mysie's back door,
Alane in a room sat the twa-some;
Their drinkin' in public was ower,
An' rung the bell—canny, tae ca' some.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

The hostess responded wi' speed;
They soucht half-a-peck, tae be sparin';
They didna want ill in their heid—
A crack was the maist o' their erran'.
O sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

She brocht the Imperial dose,
A sonsie big glass set beside it,
Whan what did ae cronie propose?
Twa words for the mercies provided.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

They baith pu'd alike a lang face,
An' ane o' them span oot a blessin',
Then liftin' the stoup wi' sic grace,
Discover'd the drink was—amissin'.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

Puir Mysie was ca'd ben ere lang—
They said that nae din they intended,
But blamed her wi' daein' far wrang,
An' Mysie grew mighty offended.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

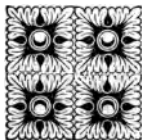
She ca'd them up hill an' doon brae—
Auld rascals tae cheat a puir widow,
An' threaten't tae get them that day,
Frae the Bailie, what baith stood in need o'.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

The keckle was jist at its hicht,
The mystery no a bit clearer,
When Mysie's e'e sparkl't fu' bricht
As ane o' them drew raither near her.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

She charged him wi' smell o' the drink,
An', faith ! there was nae use denyin't ;
His bleer't een began noo tae blink,
An' put a sad en' tae his tryin't.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

At last he admitted the fac'—
Nae won'er the drink gaed amissin'—
He swallow't it a' in a crack,
The while that his frien' ask't the blessin'.
O, sleekit an' sly are we, etc.

His cronie brak forth in advice,
Wha never had kent sic a daein' ;
But he lauch't jist, an' said he'd been wice,
Had he watch't a' the time he was prayin'.
O, sleekit an' sly are we,
We're sleekit an' sly at the drinkin',
Frae a' a guid name in oor e'e,
But aye tae the deil keepin' winkin'.





MY FIRST SAIR HEART.

WE a' thro' life meet crosses,
We've a' in turn tae mourn
Ower hopes deferred, an' losses
Sae waefu' tae be borne :
An' whiles the grief that's newest
We think the deepest dart ;
But mine maist lastin', truest,
Was my firstⁿ sair heart.

My dear guidman's a sailor ;
His ship had gane tae sea,
Three lang munes ere I'd hail her
Restorin' him tae me ;
Jist three dawns gane her weeghin'
Oor firstlin' bairn was born,
An' faither far frae seein'
His wee star o' morn.

I lo'ed my bonnie bairnie
Abune a' I can tell—
Indeed, I thocht there werna
Anither like itsel' ;

I kent 'twas Gude's ain blessin',
An' wish'd the three munes gane,
That faither's fond caressin'
Wreath'd wi' mine oor ain.

But sorrow cam fu' early,
Baith joy an' hope tae blicht ;
The big saut tears ran sairly—
My life was very nicht.
The wee thing sicken'd sairly,
An' sune 'twas taen awa ;
My ain life, dreary, gladly
Wad hae gane an'a'.

My dear guidman's returnin'—
O, wae, hoo thick the gloom !
He sorrow, blin'in', burnin'
Shed ower the cradle toom.
He saw the green turf happit
Abune his bairnie's heid,
An' ilk big tear that drappit,
Shone on't like a bead.

Nor dinna blame me greetin',
Whan musin' on't the noo,
For whan in mind thus meetin',
My heart afresh fills fu' ;

I canna help but sorrow,
Ere this vext life departs—
Till dawns that lang, lang morrow
Kennin' nae sair hearts.

HOPE.

HO' the present may be shining,
Future's veiled in thickest night,
But on hope we're each reclining,
Coming days may prove as bright.
Nay, much brighter sweet Hope paints them—
She can ne'er misfortune nurse—
And the worst of ills that taints them
Is—To-morrow comes no worse.
Hope on earth is half our living—
Strive to keep despair away :
Hope beyond the grave is giving
Promise of a joy for aye.

Have we cause for bitter grieving ?
Shackled slaves in Sorrow's team ;
Hope comes half our load relieving,
Soothing with a pleasant dream :

Shews us morning dull and clouded
Feathering into sunny noon,
And the world in darkness shrouded
Silver'd by the faithful moon.
Hope on earth is half our living—
Strive to keep despair away;
Hope beyond the grave is giving
Promise of a joy for aye.

PROVIDENCE IN THE PARRITCH PAT.

AFORE the riever Fate had made
O' Luckie Broom a widow,
Dame Fortune only scanty gied
What puir life stood in need o';
An' sae, whan Death took Sawners ower,
He left her single-sided,
Wi' ae bit bairn, the last o' fowr,
For life's fecht ill provided.

Tho' Luckie hunger's stang nicht fin',
She wadna thole tae fear it—
Inheritin' frae kith an' kin
The Covenanter's speerit :

An' aye whan aumry shelves were bare,
 " My bairn," she'd say, " content ye,
Kind Providence shall bring us fare,
 An' we shall yet hae plenty;"

Hoo Providence could tae them come
 The bairn dumfooner't fairly :
He'd spier, " Can He come down the lum ?"
 An', " He'll hae lang legs shurely !"
His mither tae sic questions queer
 Wi' answers try't tae learn him ;
But tho' she saw Guid's haun aye near,
 The bairn could ne'er discern Him.

It happen't on ae luckless day,
 Whan Fate wad houns fain scatter,
She brocht the parritch-pat up frae
 The burn, half-filled wi' water,
An' hung't tae simmer on the swee
 Till she some meal nicht borrow,
An' left the bairnie, sae thocht she,
 Beside the fire in sorrow.

But ere she had been lang awa',
 The bairn was aff an' socht her ;
His mither wonder't what ava'
 The tidin's were he brocht her.

“O, mither,” cried he, “while I sat,
An’ up the lum was lookin’,
Kind Providence loup’t in the pat,
An’ faith, he’s got a drookin’.”

The mither thocht tae lick the wean,
But, then, he kentna jokin’;
Sae kennin’ he was jist mista’en,
Gaed hame, whan—maist provokin’—
A puddock splitter’t in the pat;
She’d wi’ the water caught it,
An’ as the water hetter gat
The puddock mair did faut it.

Ah ! Providence taks queer ways whiles
Tae reach the puir He blesses,
For sune the story travell’t miles,
An’ closed that hame’s distresses,
An’ presents cam’ frae near an’ wide—
Baith store o’ meat an’ cleedin’—
Sae, what for should we no confide
In Gude for aucht we’re needin’?





THE BULL AND THE FLOWER.

A FABLE FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

HALLOO ! girls and boys. Come and all follow me !
Let us shut ourselves in from the show'r.
You like to hear Fables ? Then come round my knee
And I'll tell of the Bull and the Flow'r.

Now, listen. A farmer had once a mad bull,
A wilder one never was seen ;
He frightened the children when going to school,
And the men who had hay-making been ;

He toss'd the sods high with his horns in the air,
And he fought the four winds with his heels ;
His glistening eyes seem'd to shoot darts with their glare,
And a big bull was old Farmer Neil's.

One morning when rounding the field where he grazed,
Keeping roaring as none else could do,
With pride, he right into the air his tail raised,
As he spied a flow'r sparkling with dew.

“Ha, ha!” said the bull in the language its own,
“What a dainty bit bite I have here;
Thou’lt sweeten the green leaves that round thee are grown!”
And the little flow’r trembled with fear.

“Oh, dear Mister Bull, dare thou make me thy prey?
I’m sure there is plenty of room
For two, and far more, in this great field to stay.”
Said the floweret, “Please leave me to bloom.

“Why stare at me so with those big fiery eyes?
How thou frighten me, Bull, with thy roar!
Can’st thou not wear a smile half as sweet as my dyes,
And this fearful distemper give o’er?”

The bull then replied, “Dost thou not know, this field
Without question belongs all to me?
I can feed as I please on whate’er it may yield,
And why should I not eat up thee?”

“I know that no guardian e’er planted thee here,
But thou’st thought just to take thine own way,”
And seeing the bull’s big white teeth coming near,
The flow’r pled to be spared for one day.

“Oh, will not my sweet smell thy anger appease,
And my beauty shall it not atone?”
“No, no,” said the bull, “I know nothing of these,”
And the floweret was instantly gone.

Then, licking his lips, he set out on a race
In search for more mischief to do :—
Should you liked to have been in that sweet floweret's place?
Should you liked if that bull had caught you?

Do you know, boys and girls, what this Fable would teach ?
Never enter the broad field of Sin ;
You have no calling brings you within Satan's reach,
And it's hard to get out when once in.

Like a wild roaring lion does Satan roam there,
In search of some one to devour ;
So, when tempted to sin, boys and girls, beware,
And remember "The Bull and the Flower."





AFTER THE BATTLE.

“Once this soft turf, this rivulet’s sands,
Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,
And fiery hearts and armed hands
Encountered in the battle cloud.”

—BRYANT.

SOLEMN stillness, sacred stillness,
More than holy Sabbath morn ;
Not even a bird was on the wing,
Dumb hung the hunter’s horn ;
The shout, the drum, the clash of arms,
The cannon’s deafening roar—
Those pageants of the battle-field—
Had sunk to quiet once more.

It was summer, balmy summer—
The fields were gold and green,
The forest pines stood plumed, erect,
In proud and lofty mien ;
But blighted, cold, and lifeless lay
Upon the battle-field
The stoutest arms, the bravest hearts
That all the West could yield.

And thro' the lingering, wreathy smoke,
The setting sun shone red,
And shed a mock life-bloom upon
The faces of the dead.
When o'er the sacred ground, alone,
And sick at heart, I trod,
Seeking to do a tender act
Unknown to all, save God.

I had a comrade, one indeed
Who well deserved the name ;
We march'd together side by side
And fought in freedom's claim.
But camp-wards he, this luckless day,
Knew not the measured tread ;
And sun-down saw me, sorry seek
His corpse among the dead.

I stood contemplating in awe
The task I had to do,
And saw the faces, young and old,
Of many whom I knew :
To right, to left, which way I turned,
And far as eye could see,
I read the ills of war—the cost
Of setting poor slaves free.

Some seemed to sleep fatigue away—
Firm in their grasp their arms,
As ready for the fray again
At rattle of alarms ;

Contented on their gory bed,
As infancy at rest
In placid sleep so holy on
The gentle mother's breast.

But not so calm did many look,
Wild was their sightless stare,
And youthful brows, once smooth,
Were like the brows of age with care ;
Torn and distorted many forms
That bravely had withstood—
Like rocks that breathed, and lived, and moved—
The charging rebel brood.

Companions clasped each other's hands ;
A brother seemed to press
A brother closer to his breast,
As if to soothe distress :
Of children fathers seemed to dream,
And of their widows' tears
As struggling in this world so drear,
Alone, in after years.

Methought I saw bereav'd friends mourn
In weeds of sombre black,
And tell their loss befallen, which worlds,
Even Heaven, could not bring back.
Methought, I saw the glad home made
The dwelling-place of gloom—
The parents' silvery tresses grow
The riper for the tomb.

Still sadly musing on the dead,
Methought, I heard a moan—
It could not be the passing wind,
Nor soldier's dying groan,
For all lay soundly slumbering,
Nor even the wind did sigh.
I paused.—Another moan!—A hand
Uplifted caught my eye.

With eager step I reached the spot.
Oh, Fortune's favour great!
The voice I heard was from the lips
That spoke to me of late,
The hand uplifted was that hand
I oft in friendship shook—
'Twas my brave, beloved comrade,
But death was in that look.

"You long have been my friend," he said,
"We've loved each other well,
But grieve not that we now need part,
I go with saints to dwell;
The day may not be distant when
You'll join our army there,
Where wrongs and sorrows never are,
Nor battles are to dare."

He then in faltering accents left
His love to friends on earth,
And prayed God's blessings might be shed
Around his father's hearth;

And bade me make his mother proud—
'Twas noble thus to die
Fighting to right inhuman wrongs—
The cause was His most High.

He gazed upon the heavens and smiled,
And fondly grasped my hand :
Then quietly his spirit soared
Unto the Better Land.
I closed his dim and dreamy eyes,
And kissed his marble brow,
And a face ne'er looked more happy
Than my dead companion's now.

The awful silence reigned again—
Again I was alone,
I shed a shower of sorrow o'er
The fallen flower scarce blown.
And with a brother's depth of love,
I sought to find a tomb,
And chose a spot, beneath an oak,
Begemmed with summer bloom ;

Where birds, which from the battle's din
In fear took swiftest wing,
Would on the morrow come again
A requiem to sing.
It bordered on the battle-field—
Fit place for warrior true—
And near the spot from whence he bade
This warring world adieu.

No escort of our soldiery
In fitting solemn train,
Were there to pay their last respect
With meet funereal strain :
Alone I bore him to the shade,
There laid him in his grave
And left him in that glorious sleep
Awaiting comrades brave.





A HEARTY, GUID NEW YEAR.

ANITHER year we've seen rung oot—
Auld Time his girr maun ca' ;
We needna mourn, let's cantie be,
An' weel-wish ane an' a'.
Anither year we've seen rung in,
Gude grant wi't muckle cheer,
Tae auld an' young, tae rich an' puir,
A guid, a glad new year.

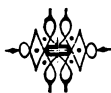
Anither year's gane wi' the lave,
Let's mind the year's wee bairns ;
There's some jist clad in lang claes yet,
While some the creepin' learns.
But in the year we've seen begun
They'll rin an' mak a steer,—
We gladly wish the promise buds
A happy, thrifty year.

Anither year's gane slippin' bye,
An' whiter lies the snaw
O' age upon the auld folk's heids,
As ilk year slips awa',

May heaven her kindest blessin's send
Wha age's burdens bear.
We wish them totterin' doun the brae,
A hale an' hearty year.

Anither year has scatter'd frien's
Oot ower the warl' sae wide,
They're miss'd frae ilka social ring,
Frae ilka ingle-side.
We canna kindly shake their haun's,
Their wish we canna hear;
But ken their prayer is oor's for them—
A prosp'rous guid New Year.

Anither year we've seen rung in;
Fu' weel we're wishin' a';
An' for oorselves—in leevin' weel,
Some cares we'll keep awa'.
It's true that sorrows may us press,
We may need shed a tear,
But muck is oor's the makin' o'
A hearty, guid New Year.





THE LASSIE I LO'E.

D SWEET is the mornin',
Wi' dew-drops adornin'
The flow'rs that bespeak o' the bricht sim-
An' cheerin' the noon-day, mer day ;]
Whan birds are in tune gay,
An' lambs gaily frisk on the green sunny brae ;
An' bonnie's the nicht fine,
Whan many stars sae bricht shine,
Wi' big lauchin' mune sailin' ower the calm blue ;
But as sweet an' as cheerie,
An' bonnie's my dearie,
My ain dearest Mary, the lassie I loe.
She's a jewel sae rare,
Her weal's a' my care,
O, Mary's the lassie wha's aye been sae true ;
She's sweet an she's cheerie,
An' bonnie's my dearie,
My ain dearest Mary, the lassie I loe.

Nor streams in their ringin',
Nor birds in their singin',
Can peer wi' the sweet siller notes o' my dear ;
Her cheek's like the red rose,
Her een like twa jet sloes,
An' smiles roun' her mou' play, that failna tae cheer ;

At closin' o' ilk day
I'm jist as ony prince gay,
Contentment's the crown that encircles my brow
When I meet wi' my dearie,
Sae blithe an' sae cheerie,
My ain dearest Mary, the lassie I loe.
She's a jewel sae rare, &c.

Wi' coortin' an' blessin',
Caressin' an' kissin',
Auld Time's slippin' saftly bye Mary an' me,
The happy day is nearin'
We hope tae be steerin'
The same little boatie ower life's troubled sea.
Whan ill winds wad wreck us,
The same Pow'r protec' us
Wha's been oor protection, an' brocht us weel thro';
O, guide safe my dearie,
Sae blithe an' sae cheerie,
My ain dearest Mary, the lassie I loe.
She's a jewel sae rare,
Her weel's a' my care,
O, Mary's the lassie wha's aye been sae true;
She's sweet an' she's cheerie,
An' bonnie's my dearie,
My ain dearest Mary, the lassie I lo'e.



THE MASONS' GOAT.

DEDICATED TO THE BRETHREN OF THE CAMPSIE CALEDONIAN
ST. JOHN'S ROYAL ARCH LODGE, 195.

YE'VE ask'd a sang, an' what tae sing
Has cost but little swith'rin',
I'll sing about that beastie famed,
The masons' goat, my brethren.
Roun the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed,
Clear the way afore us,
O, the deevil's taen its heid—
Brethren, gies a chorus.

Oor goat's a mystery tae oorsel',
But mystery 'tis far greater,
Tae thae wha in the outer warl'
Sae sair misca't, puir creatur.
Roun' the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed, etc.

It never dreads a prince's pow'r,
Nor scorns a peasant's station,
It ne'er can judge its rider's coat,
An' rins thro' every nation.
Roun' the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed, etc.

Regardless wha sits on its back,
Its cantrips aye repeatin',
It flees, it boxes, and it flings,
Till sair wi' fricht we're sweatin'.
Roun the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed, etc.

Wi' neither horns nor hair tae haud,
Tae fa' aff't may bambaze us,
But what for should we fear tae fa',
Wi' brethren there tae "raise" us.
Roun' the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed, etc.

The warl' may say, "Gin it were oors,
We'd put on it a fetter."
The warl' may think it's wondrous wise,
But masons a' ken better.
Roun the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed, etc.

Tae hapless puir an' helpless auld,
The warl' may feign a blindness;
But brethren frae the goat can claim
Its milk o' *human kindness*.
Roun' the lodge wi' lichtnin speed, etc.

Then *peace* tae wha hae ridden't roun',
Guidwill tae every brither,
An' fellowship, the craft best ken,
Unite us mair thegither.
Roun' the lodge wi' lichtnin' speed,
Clear the way afore us,
O, the deevil's taen its heid—
Brethren, gies a chorus.



*THE ASSASSINATION OF JAMES I., OF
SCOTLAND, 1437.*

A POETICAL RENDERING FROM A SKETCH BY REV. GEORGE
GILFILLAN, WHICH APPEARED IN THE "PEOPLE'S
JOURNAL" A FEW YEARS AGO.

KING James, the people's chosen king,
The good, the great, the bold,
Had held a Royal Parliament—
The last he e'er should hold.
His courtly cavalcade rode thro'
The streets of Edinbro',
Bound for his royal home at Perth ;
And many folds of snow,
Were waved from ladies' lily hands,
And hurrahs, loud and long,
Were raised by honest-hearted Scots
Throughout a loyal throng.

But, as they neared the broadened Forth,
A blaze of proud array,
A Highland woman, pale as death
Hallo'd them on their way.
"My lord, the king," she shouted wild,
"If o'er the frith ye go,
Ye never shall return again
Alive to Edinbro'."

But James believed each heart his own
That beat abroad the land,
And who thro' Scotland's loyalty
Dared thrust the treacherous hand.
Nor could he fear the elements,
Heaven gave no omen bad,
And safe across the flowing Forth
James deemed the woman mad.

Retired within the palace wall,
How seemly moved the world ;
Without was all a blessed peace,
Within was love unfurled.
He loved his Queen as dear as life,
His courtiers gained esteem,
Tho' in the heart of good King James
Almighty reigned supreme.
His courtiers gained esteem, and wore
New tokens of his love ;
But, ah ! some traitorous hands were hid
beneath the glossy glove :
Beguiling looks and courtesies
Hid minds and hearts as base
As ever stained with blood the lore
Of Scotland's ancient days.
For, in the Court were kindred, friends
Who hated king and God,
Whose hearts were in a treacherous plot,
And would its success 'plaud.
The traitor, Grahame, sought to revenge
Supposed wrong with blood,

And Athole, uncle to the king,
For crown ambitious stood !
Of plans they laid for massacre,
Poor James, betimes, was warned,
But he to entertain reports
Against the traitors—scorned.

'Twas night. The year scarce two moons old,
Nobles and ladies round
The banquet sat, and music made
The palace halls resound.
Athole was there till night dipp'd deep
With mask'd heart of hate,
He supped with James, and, Judas like,
Withdrew, bloodthirsty, late.
Soon to the gate a knocking came,
A page this message brought—
“ My leige, the highland prophetess,
The maniac as you thought,
Has followed us to Perth, to crave
An audience of the King.”
“ Say,” said King James, “ to-morrow, then,
Her errand she may bring.”
Oh, how she grieved that answer brought,
Reluctant she withdrew,
And whispered, “ Ere to-morrow, page,
Ye'll this denial rue,
And for the King's to-morrow, Ah!
'Twill never know the sun—
In losing crown and life on earth,
Be Heaven's immortal won.”

Another hour of merriment,
Of jest, of song, and sup,
Then up arose King James and called
To pass the parting cup ;
The cup went round with loyal pledge,
The goodly throng dismissed,
And many felt that God through James
Had dear old Scotland blessed.

The King, his Queen, and ladies then
Met in a lesser room,
With glad hearts lighting up each face,
None dreamt of coming gloom.
When, lo ! the flash of torches came
Up from the garden straight,
And brightly shone upon the wall,
Which, to interpretate
The weal or woe in it foretold
Astrologers were none,
And at the midnight hour to come,
The King looked pale, undone.
Then boisterous words and clash of arms
Harsh sounded from below,
And he unarmed and unprepared,
How could he face the foe ?

The warning of the prophetess
Flashed fresh upon his mind,
But no time for reflections then,
He'd bar the door behind ;

But treacherous hands had torn the bars
And locks from every door,
And as each hope of refuge failed,
King James was awe-struck more.
He wrenched a trap-way in the floor,
Leap'd in a vault below,
The ladies neatly closed it o'er
That searchers scarce would know,
And Cathrine Douglas thrust her arm,
So delicately fair,
Into the staple of the bar,
And bravely fixed it there ;
But soon the fair limb shattered fell,
The " Bar-lass" fainted lay :
No heroine so brave has failed
From that till this same day !

The murderers rushed into the room,
And brandished each a blade ;
The Queen fell bleeding at their feet,
(Around her fell each maid,)
And even the feeble flame of life
That flickered in her breast,
Had been extinguished ; but a knave,
Their slaughter thus suppressed,
" Hold, hold ! You drain a woman's blood,
No wrongs of hers we avenge.
Go, fill the heart of James with blades,
Seek out—seek out—revenge."

The butchers searching distant rooms,
Restored quiet so complete,
The King imagined that some scare
Had forced them to retreat,
And, leaping from the vault was bound
In an unfriendly grip,
While, "Found ! found !" ran the palace thro'
And echoed from each lip.
The King a brave resistance made,
Unarmed he struggled well,
But as the cowards numbered fast,
He gashed and bleeding fell.

James made an offer. "For my life
I'll half my kingdom fair ;"
But he was answered by the blades
They brandished in the air.
"Here then my last request. Let my
Confessor come !" he cried ;
But Grahame, too proud to do his worst,
With iron tongue replied :—
"Confessor. Thou'lt have one. My sword
Knows where thy heart doth lie ;
'Tis keen, 'twill reach its inmost part,
Dost please thee ? Villian, die !"
They dipped their daggers in his corpse,
And red with reeking gore,
Ensheathed them, and retired, and each
A bloody trophy bore.

The traitors glorying o'er their shame
Made all the palace ring ;
But, Scotland mourned her own right hand—
A Christian and a King.





THE PLAGUE O' PLAYIN' BOOLS.

THE plague o' playin' bools !
Wha was't brocht it'in ?
Turn ye up auld Moses' law,
Try an' fin't a sin.
Jist gie Johnnie bools tae play,
What's about the schule ?
Faith, I'm fear't, whan muckle big,
He'll be sic a fule.

See, sic loons he mixes 'mang,
I maun cry him hame.
Johnnie, dae ye hear me ? No,
Ower thrang wi' the game :
Guidness, hoo my bluid rins cauld
As the loons I hear ;
Johnnie's no sae deaf, I doot,
Whan they curse an' swear.

“Holie” is his favourite game,
Hoo he birls them in ;
“Ringie,” “scorie,” weel he plays—
He's a dab tae win ;

An' at "muggie," losh, my sirs,
 Johnnie aften brags
Hoo he sends his neebors up
 For their nippy "nags."

Sic a pock o' bools he's won—
 Hunners, I may say,
Redies, jaries, marbles blue,
 Yellow, green, an' grey;
But they daichy peasmeal trash
 Ne'er his pooches line,
They've no gat the weicht nor ring
 O' the current coin.

Every nicht he coonts them ower,
 Can it be for greed?
Losh, an' whan he's gane tae sleep,
 Bools row thro' his heid.
Maybe he's a conscience sair,
 Cheatin' whiles tae win,
While us aulder folk scarce think
 Cheatin' sic a sin.

Bools are maybe walth tae him,
 But they're loss tae me;
There he's comin' wi' his breeks
 Oot at ilka knee.

Last week, raxin' tae a shot,
Braced as ticht's a drum,
Tartled a' his tither pair
Richt across the bum.

Prayin' as he oucht tae dae,
Doesna wear his claes,
For he tumbles ower asleep
Aften as he prays,
But, atweel, he's jist in that
Like oorsels, I fear.
Oh, the plague o' playin' bools!
Johnnie, dae ye hear?

SCOTTISH HEARTS AND HANDS.

ONS of Scotland—gallant band!
Praises of the muse demand,
Strike, and ring frae land to land
The chords of victory!
Sons of heathery dale and hill
With valourous deeds our histories fill!
Let the toast wi' micht an' will
Be "Scottish hearts and hands."

Names of Scotchmen in the grave—
Dauntless seamen, soldiers brave—
Aye frae Scotia's sons shall crave
 A lasting memory.
Wha wad grudge the good they've done,
Or the fame for Scotland won?
Let us wield baith sword and gun
 Wi' Scottish hearts and hands !

Nation ne'er has nation found
A truer friend in friendship bound,
Let them seek the whole earth round ;
 But wae for enemies.
Nations bow to Scotland's word !
Monarchs tremble at her sword !
Armies sleep beneath the yird,
 By Scottish hearts and hands !

Mercy on the Scotchman's foe,
Wha'd plot Scotia's overthrow ;
Like to reapers gane to mow,
 Are Scotchmen in the fray.
What care Scotchmen for the grave
When home and country are to save ?
None they fear but God, wha gave
 Them Scottish hearts and hands.



THE SAILOR'S HAVEN.

FAR, far from thee, for many moons,
My bark has braved the deep ;
But through each watch I thought of thee
Till rock'd again to sleep.
Unceasing was thy sailor's love,
Where're his lot befel,
I've loved thee long, and will for aye,
My bonnie, bonnie Bell.

In all the joys that filled our crew
There was no share for me,
They could not bear away my thoughts
Of how it fared with thee :
And often on the passing breeze,
That blew t'ward where you dwell,
I threw a kiss and vows of love
To bonnie, bonnie Bell.

Now, fortune's moored me safe again
Within my haven of rest,
And I could weep the tears of joy,
As in these arms I'm pressed.
O let us name the wedding day,
And seal this crowning spell,
For life and hope, my all are set
On thee, my bonnie Bell.



HOW PHELM TRUMPED THE TRICK.

BOLD Captain Fitzdrum of the Rangers,
Had a servant few else could surpass,
Who, tho' much among horses and mangers
Was a very long way from an ass.

His name it was Phelim O'Routrim,
A native of Erin's green Isle,
Not a spark tho' of green was about him,
As you'll learn if you listen a while.

He stood just six feet without leather,
And fifteen good stones he would weigh,
And, with both soul and body together,
The captain he served night and day.

Then his heart; and faith it was a kind one,
Indeed, and it must have been great,
While his stomach would stagger'd a blind man,
Could he only have seen how he ate.

But let us to business. Good Phelim
Had been with Fitzdrum to the East,
Where the blacks would thought nothing to kill them,
And eat them alive for a feast.

And rare things the Captain had gather'd
For presents to friends and himself,
But to keep them all safe, Phil was "bother'd,"
When homeward-bound in the "Sea-Elf."

The "Sea-Elf" had one box aboard her,
Like a tea-chest, for certain, a prize,
Prime cigars ! and the Captain implor'd for
His servant to cheat the excise.

"Och, murther, and how can I do it?"
Ask'd Phil at his sensible self,
"If I try't and thin fail, shure, I'll rue it,
And I must try't, or go to the shelf.

"But shure, we've a long way to sail yet ;
It's no use such sorrows to suck,
Thro' so lengthy a pipe—like a snail yet
I'll steal meself over the muck."

As day after went a-flying,
The good ship progress'd on her way,
And Phelim had many times, sighing,
Express'd himself thus on "the sae."



“Och, a moighty big thing is this wather,
Shure, cud'nt we do with much less,
And thin, when a wreck's, what's the matther,
Dry land cud be got in distress.

“I never yet died in creation,
That I'm drown'd may it never be tould,
A duckin's a cool preparation,
Moight chance give a fellow a could.

“But och, were the sae Irish Whisky,
The love to me master I bear,
Wad provoke me to swim o'er it briskly,
And land his box safe, or it's quare.”

By and by, Phil, his wits all unlocking,
Tried to think where to hide it at all;
But he might just as soon thought of choking
The wind with a “pratie” quite small.

He thought once to tie't with a cable,
And swing it right over the ship;
But, then, it would turn fortune's table,
If into the sea it did slip.

And then, too, supposing it safe stay'd,
The salt sea would sometimes wash't o'er,
And the Captain's cigars, of choice leaf made,
Would smell just like dulce evermore.

Phil was searching aboard for some corner,
A priest who was sailing as well,
Espied him—address'd him as "for'ner,"
And asked him his grievance to tell.

"Och, shure and it's no shame of moin, sur :
But Captain Fitzdrum, do you see,
Has a box of cigars—very foine, sur,
He's left in the keepin' of me.

"So, I'm lookin' for some place to hide thim,
Lest thim custom house bhoys make a stur ;
They moight fight, you know, whin they'd divide thim,
And I'd teach thim some honesty, sur."

Phil's search, to his hopes proved "contrairy,"
No corner quite safe could be found ;
But a thought, like a cat in a dairy,
Leap'd into his head with a bound.

That thought flash'd along both his eye-strings,
And kindled his eyes with real joy,
"Shure there's nothing like aimin' at high things—
Faix, the mark of the custom house bhoys !"

"Thim custom house bhoys," whisper'd Phelim,
"Put a chalk mark on all that they pass :
Cud'nt I mark the box, and outskill thim ?
I'll teach meself that in a class !"



The ship's mate, soon after came o'er him
Ensconsed among sailcloth and ropes,
With the end of a barrel before him,
"Practysing" in very great hopes.

He told Phil he was making a grand shape—
How artistic he look'd every way :
Phil replied, " 'Tis that beautiful landscape
I'm painting—all covered with sae."

The Cook was the next to accost him,
Who proposed he was making his will ;
When troubles, enough just to roast him,
Were bequeathed him by generous Phil.

Phelim practised as spare time afforded,
Till gaily the ship reach'd the shore,
When the custom house officers boarded,
And strictly all traps they turned o'er.

As proud as a peacock, Phil watch'd them,
He, stepping up, radiantly smiled,—
Old Nick himself could not have match'd them,
The whole of Phil's project they spoiled.

For, faith, and the mark they were chalking
Was not Phelim's copy at all :
Like a ghost he along-side went stalking,
Lamenting the worst since the Fall.

"But, ha ! by St. Peter, I'll do ye's,"
Retired by himself he exclaimed,
"I've a card yet to play that will jew ye's—
Or the praste must have Phelim misnamed.

"Luk on, and admire my invintion,
Ye spirits of ould Ireland's brave !
It's a photograph, now's my intintion,
Thim blessed cigars that will save."

Having chosen an officer's bold chalk,
He down on it cautiously sat,
And, cool as a thief in an "old walk"
Stole off a good negative flat.

Yes, truth, and the chalking it was there,
Showing bravely on breeches of black,
Where, long since, the schoolmaster's tawse were,
O'er that region right under his back.

Phelim rushed to *his* box, and so neatly
Clapped down on the lid with a thump,
And left on't the chalk so completely,
Which proved *the card played was a trump.*

Of course, when the officers came on't,
Who'd blame them for letting it free :
The Captain he swallow'd the shame on't,
And gave Phelim a crown for a spree.





A MITHER, BUT NO A WIFE.

A CRADLE SONG.

WHIST, my bonnie bairnie,
 Dinna greet sae sair ;
 Mither's heart is breakin',
 Dinna rack it mair.
Whist, my darlin' tottie,
 Cradlie-ba' an' sleep—
Nicht is unca eerie,
 Life is unca steep.

An' the waefu' win's sough,
 Wailin in the lum,
'Minds me o' the kirkyard,
 Whaur are sleepin' some
Wadna' seen us wrangt sae ;
 Tho' there's ithers keep
Steekit doors against us—
 Sleep, my bairnie, sleep.

Fausely did the man woo,
 Wily did he win,
Then he left me, whist, doo,
 Tae the lash o' sin ;

Left the burden a' mine—
Hoo it crushes down—
Sorrow drooks the hale warl',
An' the heavens froon!

Frien's, wha wad be guid folk,
Banish me frae hame,
Thinkin' in this big toon
They may hide the shame :
Aiblins they may fin' yet,
In this warl' wide,
Want o' kindly pity,
Worth o' hollow pride.

Hidden lies the future—
O' it's dark tae me !
But for your sake, tottie,
I could thole tae dee,
Sittin' in the shadows
Hope can ne'er dispel,
Dreedin' aye the warst comes
E'er on sinner fell.

Gin ye winna sleep, bairn,
Come tae mither's arms ;
Ay, ye'll lauch an' craw noo,
Prood as ye had farms
Growin' ower wi' ripe corn :
Lauch an' craw awa',
They're the only sun-blinks
Ever on me fa'.



*AN AULD MAID'S ADDRESS TAE HER
TEAPAT.*

MY wee auld-farrant, black-faced frien,
There's changes fa'n us baith a wheen,
Ye're dirty like, but winna clean
Ye are sae auld,
An' hae sae aften toasted been
Wi' fire sae bauld.

Hoo oft when here alane I've sat,
Deserted by a rakish cat,
Or whan my heart some soorin' gat,
I charmed hae been
Wi' your contents, my dumpy pat,
My constant frien.

Inqueesitively, in aboot
Come neeborin' wives I'd dae without ;
They jeer me on your broken spoot—
Richt sair's their jaw—
An' whiles, I'd fain mak them flee oot
Their croons tae claw.

They tell me ye're but pottery ware,
An' threep wi' me I'm no sae puir
But micht hae ane a' in a glare,
 A siller pat ;
Ye'd think that I was a' their care,
 Tae hear their chat.

A cheena pat I hae's genteel—
I doot I'll ne'er it need atweel—
An' since ye've served sae lang sae weel,
 We'll yet be great,
Let neebors sneer tae please the deil,
 Ye'll haud your state.

Ye're muckle waur the wear, I ken,
But sit ye there by my fire-en',
I'll keep ye lang's ye stan' your lane,
 An' fit tae brew
A wee drap whan the notion's taen,
 As I hae noo.





LITTLE WORDS.

SOME little artless, simple words,
From lips that mean no harm,
Like sparks, may kindle passions wild
To fill us with alarm :
But little words have also power
To quench the wicked flame—
Yes, little words are strong to make
The furious passion tame.
Why, then, since little simple words
In good and ill are strong,
Let's try to speak the little words
That do no neighbour wrong.

Some little words may touch a chord,
And bring forth bitter tears
From eyes that have forgot to weep
Perhaps for many years ;
But little words can also cheer,
And soothe the stricken heart,
And kindly wipe the biggest tear,
And saddest, that may start.
Why, then, since little, simple words
In good and ill are strong,
Let's try to speak the little words
That do no neighbour wrong.

While little words perchance offend
The friends we most revere,
Some little words can also make
Who speaks them doubly dear ;
If little words the sweet content
Of home betimes annoy,
Still, little words there are can fill
The world of homes with joy.
Why, then, since little, simple words
In good and ill are strong,
Let's try to speak the little words
That do no neighbour wrong.





HALESOME PARRITCH.

OH, there's nocht like the braes an' the bracin' hill breeze
For the whettin' o' appetites rare, sirs,
An' there's nocht for sic hunger a Scotchman e'er prees
Like his parritch, its antidote fair, sirs.

Oh, parritch 'is medicine, parritch is meat,
An' parritch is muscle an' bane, sirs ;
A cog fu' o' parritch sets ane on his feet,
An' we relish them aye ower again, sirs. ●

But, wi' parritch that dance tae there ain nimble tune,
O' "Camlachie-Camlachie" awa', sirs ;
It's the hottle o' stiff parritch, pechin' an' dune,
Sayin', "Parkheid—fuff—Parkheid," beats a' sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

My guidwife an' mysel', an' oor bairnies, hae aye
Been provided wi' health an' kept richt, sirs ;
We hae ne'er swallow't drugs, nor had doctors tae pay,
For we've parritch baith mornin' an' nicht, sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

Ane by ane did oor callants grow ready for wark,
Ay, an' strang, rosy rullions they grew, sirs,
There is Donald, wha does noo sae brawly his dark,
Sin' last Marti'mas haudin' the plew, sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

But, there's Dugald—he's likest his mither an' me
In his praises o' parritch an' milk, sirs,
An' I'll tell ye what happen't his very first fee,
On the farm o' Scartclean o' that ilk, sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

Weel, when Dugald cam hame for his parritch at e'en,
Frae his herdin' a' day on the hill, sirs,
He baith whistl't an' sung till his supper he'd seen—
Ah ! an then he stood stane-statue still, sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

Then his brows sulkit doon ower his big lauchin' een,
An' his nose he turn't up to the thack, sirs,
An' his heart tae loup intae his mou' fidgit keen,
But he never a word had yet spak', sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

“Losh ! what ails ye, my mannie ?” the housekeeper speer't,
Was he no wantin' parritch at nicht, sirs ?
He was hungry—ay, wonnerfu' hungry—an' sneer't
At what he ca'd “a pitifu' sicht,” sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.



“’Od sake, ay, the flees mak’ o’ ye’r milk a guse-dib ;
They’ll be a’ droon’t,” quoth she, an’ she blew’t, sirs,
“ Dinna fear that,” quoth Dugald, “ I’ll no tell a fib,
For the puir things can scaithless wade thro’t,” sirs.

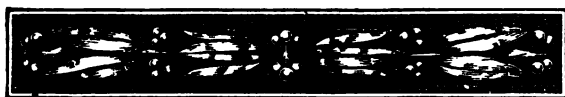
Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

“ Gin there’s ocht wrang,” quoth Jenny, “ ye aye should speak
For o’ milk they’d galores, an’ tae spare, sirs, [oot,”
“ But,” quoth Dugald, “ for that drap o’ parritch, I doot,
I had nae cause tae seek ony mair,” sirs.
Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat, etc.

But oor callants sin’ syne ne’er had room tae compleen,
For they’ve aye gat o’ parritch their fill, sirs,
Sae a fig for the new-fanglet fashions we’ve seen,
An’ a cog fu’ o’ plain parritch still, sirs.

Oh, parritch is medicine, parritch is meat,
An’ parritch is muscle an’ bane, sirs ;
A cog fu’ c’ parritch sets ane on his feet,
An’ we relish them aye ower again, sirs.





*"THEY'D NEED A LANG SPUNE THAT WAD
SUP WI' THE DEIL."*

THO' "Auld Nick's" been the subject o' painter an' priest,
An' poet alike, there are nane very shure,
But their ideal deevil—half man an' half beast—
Is maybe mair *woman* than ony's aware.
Tho' the black fouk disown him, believin' him white,
An' we scorn his kinship for reasons kent weel,
On his haur-l-a-hame manner we're a' agree't quite—
"They'd need a lang spune that wad sup wi' the deil."

He has scope in the market, an' office in state,
An', feth, in the kirk he has mony a pew
Gin he hasna the pulpit, an' aye naeways blate
Where're he may be tae breed mischief enew.
Tho' the unca guid bodies frae langsyne tae noo
Hae dous't him wi' doctrines, and foucht him wi' zeal,
They've been force't tae admit that the speerit o't's true—
"They'd need a lang spune that wad sup wi' the deil."

Hoo he coaxes us on, till a pairt we maun tak
In pleasures the fausest that please him the maist,
Till he chances tae get an ill win' on oor back,
Tae drift us in ruinous gaits wi' mair haste ;

An' in spite o' a warnin's we're aye fain tae houp
In sharin' his revels that a' may come weel,
But there's bitterness craftily mix't in ilk soup—
“They'd need a lang spune that wad sup wi' the deil.”

THE MERMAID'S SONG.

UNFETTERED and free,
We live in the sea ;
Wherever the sea is we're free to roam,
While reigneth the day,
While night holdeth sway,
For ever these long golden tresses we comb.

The calm may look bright,
The storm's our delight,
We merrily ride on the galloping wave ;
Waves frothing in strife
Bring mermaid's new life,
Tho' often poor mortals may find them a grave.

Nor sorrow, nor care,
Nor death, nor despair
Can baffle the mirth of the mermaid's lot ;
Our hair's never white,
Our eye's ever bright,
And wrinkles and old age affect us not.

Our halls are the caves
beneath the green waves,
Of coral upreared in the sea-weed bowers ;
The murmuring shell
Our sea-song doth swell
In courts where the pearls fall in richest showers.

We're a merrier band
Than found yet on land,
With pleasures far more than a king can boast ;
We're a goodly throng,
We're myriads strong,
And ride on the billows 'round every coast.

Then, who would not be
A nymph of the sea,
Wherever the sea is be free to roam
In sunbeams so gay,
Or moonlight's soft ray,
With long golden tresses of hair to comb ?



AFTER THE WRECK.

“ As in the sacred story
Calm o’erspread the sea,
By these few words spoken,
Peace came unto me,
Floated o’er my spirit
Peace and holy calm,
Soothed my heart-ache weary
With their precious balm.”

DEAR mother, why thus weep
Tho’ my father’s grave
Be in the ocean deep,
’Neath the mighty wave ;
Wipe that tear from your eye,—
Father weeps not—nay,
Make that your last sad sigh,
This your last sad day.

Indeed, you were not near
When the storm did lower,
But God would willing hear
In father’s dying hour

His breathing forth a pray'r
For us left behind—
So, mother, why despair?
God keeps us in mind.

You think Fate has been hard,
Since where he's asleep
Is not the quiet church-yard,
But the troubled deep:
You wish his grave was near
Where you'd nourish flowers
With many a sad, sad tear
In your lonesome hours.

Tho' far his grave may be
From his native land,
Hid in the deep from thee,
'Tis a grave so grand!
There, in a coral tomb
Peaceful does he lie
Where countless sea-flowers bloom,
Watch'd by God's own eye.

His spirit dwells in heav'n,
Singing aye the song
To him the highest given,
By the angel throng.
Then cease to be so sad,
Soothe your sorrowing heart,
We'll meet in heaven so glad,
Never more to part.



OOOR AIN THORNTREE.

(WRITTEN FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE THORNTREE LODGE
OF FREE MASONS, NO. 512, AND RESPECTFULLY DEDI-
CATED TO THE MEMBERS, 10TH MARCH, 1876.)

LANG ages hae gane creepin' past since first the glorious
licht
Shed radiance ower the britherhood, whase brethren's
here the nicht :
That influence o' love an' licht, eternal, strong, an' free
Has rear'd within oor very midst oor ain Thorntree.

O, oor ain Thorntree, O, oor ain Thorntree,
May it prosper lang an' flourish aye, oor ain Thorntree.

Nae woodman daur approach this tree wi' hard edged tool
tae harm't,
Wi' secrets at the plantin' o't 'twas 'gainst a' frem fouk
charm't ;
The square an' plumb-line guides its growth, its fruits, the
graces three—
An' mony a happy nicht we've spent beneath oor Thorntree.

O, oor ain Thorntree, O, oor ain Thorntree, etc.

Ootsiders whiles infer the wark o' masonry's no guid,
Because they kenna what we dae, because frae them 'tis hid;
They doot if it's presided ower by that a' seein' e'e,
Tho' mony a guid an' worthy man sits 'neath oor Thorntree.

O, oor ain Thorntree, O, oor ain Thorntree, etc.

Oor loyal ranks are fillin' fast tae bring the bard's words true—
That man tae man the warl' ower shall brithers be a' thro'—
Then here's tae him that fills the chair, at hame an ower the
sea—

Tae him that rules amang us, 'neath oor ain Thorntree.

O, oor ain Thorntree, O, oor ain Thorntree, etc.

Then bumpers fill and drink tae a' hae *entered* 'neath its
shade,
Wha've been received upon its square an' fellow-craftsmen
made;
Tae a' wha've reach'd St. John's tap step, that high, sublime
degree—
That were *raised* tae master masons 'neath oor ain Thorntree.

O, oor ain Thorntree, O, oor ain Thorntree,
May it prosper lang an' flourish aye, oor ain Thorntree.





THE GREETIN' WEAN.

WHAUR can oor wee Tot hae gane?
This can ne'er be her :
We'll hae nae sic greetin' wean
Kickin' up sic stir.
We maun sen' for chimley Jock,
An' gin he may come,
You'll be rumbl't in his pock
Up an' doun the lum.

Fairies hae been blam't fu' sair,
Playin' pranks wi' bairns ;
Can they hae taen Tot'sae fair,
Ower the Muir o' Mearns?
Is't some tinkler wean they've brocht
In the place o' Tot ?
O, the mischief they hae wrocht !
O, the greetin' o't !

Oor bairn had a sweet wee face,
An' a sweet we mou' ;
No a smile on yours we trace—
Warst o' weans are you.
There the fairies comin' back—
See the ugly sicht.
Tak her tae your den sae black—
Noo, ye've got a fricht.

Rowin', roarin' on the flure,
Thumpin' wi' your feet;
Come an' sit on your wee chair,
Tak a nice wee greet.
There's a bonnie greetin' wean—
O, you're unca braw!
Can this be oor Tot again?
Wad you "pay" your ma'?

Clap her till she's better pleas't;
Let her see her face,
Bring the glass ben till she sees't—
There's a toon's disgrace.
O, you want tae kiss me noo,
Thinkin' shame, nae doot;
Seein' richt oorsels, like you,
Changes bring aboot.





MONTH-SONNETS FOR A YEAR.

JANUARY.

WHY, like those swollen streams, do we trespass
In sinful ways, and leave the heavenward course?
The new-turned virgin page of Time, alas!
Is stained thus early—gently stings remorse.
We sigh, for tempests now enrage the sea
To scatter wreck and death around the shore;
And yet our souls, immortal tho' they be
As he who gave them birth, when driven before
Some hell-born passion to eternal woe,
So seldom bring from penitence a tear.
Heart-broken, hungry Robin mourns the snow—
No evil hath he done that death is near;
And how can we escape a wretched end
So little in our lives that can commend?

FEBRUARY.

WE call them triumphs, works achieved by man—
The feeble agent of Almighty God ;
Tho' seeking wealth or fame his cheeks grow wan,
Tho' din and struggle burden what we 'plaud.
The solar worlds roll on, no sound we hear,
Nor straining list we of the lengthening day,
And mute as mourner o'er relation's bier
Doth come the Spring, but with an air more gay.
We hear it not, the voice that wakes from sleep
Those drooping harbingers, chaste, early flowers
Amid the snow that fell in—silence deep ;
Then, wherefore boast of triumphs we call ours,
Which to accomplish, thunder, strain, and toil,
While these unboasted whisper no turmoil ?

MARCH.

THE sower's measured swing of brawny arm
Sheds forth at every stroke its shower of seed ;
For special harvest for our temporal need
Each fitting field is chosen on the farm.
Some precious littles we might scatter round,
And varied are the fields where we might sow—
When friends grow poor, a closer friendship show,
And roses spread where'er a foe is found.

Let's breathe a kindness to a dying friend,
Or warning to a neighbour's living grief
Whose youth but cankers bursting into leaf;
And, as the earth its hundreds-fold doth send,
To him who soweth thus-wise shall be given
Returns we cannot estimate—in Heaven !

APRIL.

OF thoughts, words, deeds, the most on self we spend;
Or, when with others shared, too oft, we fear,
Are given that self may profit in the end,
Since those who flatter most are held so dear.
Do April showers refresh the lily fair,
And leave athirst the humble blade of grass?
The worm even creepeth from the earth to share
The fresh distilment. Do the sunbeams pass
Rebellious man, to light and charm alone
The woolly innocents that roam the hill?
And warblers sing no sweeter round a throne
Than sitting on a poor man's window sill—
No selfish motive ruleth Nature's hand,
But blessings from it runneth free as sand.

MAY.

THE buttercups and daises bathed in dew
Shine out upon the fields like jewels rare,
And larks, like speckles on the sky-dome blue,
Pour out their carols on the balmy air;
The greenwood's all alive with birds and bees,
And children dancing round the blossoming trees;
The merry-tinkling mountain streamlet breaks
In tressy spray, and sparkles in the sun,
And gaudy water-flies, like rainbow flakes,
Woo by the slumbering lake till day is done;
Above, around, within's invoked by May
To be astir and happy, bright and gay,
And yet how many poor share not the bliss,
Who sigh and say, "A weary world is this."



JUNE.

THE maiden victim of consumption fell,
Too near death now to walk out in the sun,
At window seated sees the clear stream run,
In which, barefoot she paddled oft when well,
And views the banks where love those sweets lisped o'er
Which nourished life—sweets, time shall ne'er restore;

Nor can she at the rose-tree deck her hair
As she was wont ; and when her vase we fill,
How soon they shed their petals on the sill—
“ A little gone before,” an emblem fair.
She knows a font of life now that doth flow,
Where ever fainting, dying souls can go ;
Has found a love that ends not with the tomb,
And chosen the Rose of Sharon's fadeless bloom.

JULY.

FOND fashion's votaries, on the shelly shore
We while the gladsome holiday away,
And have our pale face fanned with healthy gales ;
We hear the sea its old song sing once more
And see the wooing waves come kiss the bay,
And hail, far out, a ship with snowy sails.
Upon the breast of time we are afloat,
With precious freight—our own immortal soul—
With birthright to a glorious destiny.
'Tis by the one way only we are brought
In safety to this holy, happy goal,
Where peace and joy reign thro' eternity.
Our chart's the Bible, and our helm is faith—
Keep Satan from the wheel—he steers to death.

AUGUST.

THE orchard, ho ! My love and I now sit
Beneath this shady bower, whose boughs are knit
Together, as to woo with us, to wit.
Fruits lend the zephyr's breath a sweet perfume :
For, tho' we miss the snowy blossom-bloom,
Ripe berries burst in fulness o'er its tomb.
Sweet, too, the breath is of my lady love ;
Her lips more luscious far than fruits can prove ;
Her cheeks more ruddy than the fruits above.
I shake the tasselled boughs that arch our bower,
And in my lady's lap a crimson shower
Of cool draughts drop, to calm life's feverish hour,
While from our hearts warm gratefulness o'erflows
To Him who sheds such bliss—such favours shows.

SEPTEMBER.

THE aged may contend they like the Spring ;
It pictures youth, and to the past they cling :
But give to us, yet young, these varied hues
When Sycamores, like deft funereal plumes,
Look defter 'mid the rich Autumnal blooms
With which rich nature half the world imbues ;
Give us these fields of ripe and waving grain ;
Let's hear the reaper's happy, homely strain,
And see the blooming maidens binding sheaves.

And, oh ! the glorious sunsets, choose we them ;
They seem reflected from the diadem
That crowns each autumn day before it leaves.
But what claims reverence most ?—the silvery locks
Of those who cling to youth, our dear old folks.

OCTOBER.

THE dawn comes in a misty morning-gown,
Embroidered with festoons of silver lace,
Which, while the day's yet young, have faded, flown,
Even as those hollow, gilded hopes we chase
That would exalt us only unto pride.
But there's a holy hope, worth all beside,
Stands like the green fern mid the fallen leaves,
More glorious than the sun that rises o'er
Yon waste of wood, poetic fancy grieves
To liken unto struggles here before
That hope be realised ; more glorious far
And sure, tho' fixed beyond the farthest star—
The hope of immortality to man :
The gracious, glorious aim of God's great plan.

NOVEMBER.

WEIRD, weird the murmur of the wind, and rain's
Incessant rattling on the window panes.
The gloomy day is one long vexsome frown
Which preyeth hard on those of stricken heart,
And tempts them to enact the coward part
Of suicide, their bitterness to crown.

But is there not a happier thought than this ?
See, by the cosy ingle, mother kiss
Her crowing little child ; on father's knee
A laughing, curly darling rides round earth,
While two mischievous urchins on the hearth
Dress pussy for a ball with wond'rous glee.
There is a silver lining to the tomb,
Why not a bright vein thro' November's gloom ?

DECEMBER.

DEAD Nature's wrapt within her shroud of snow,—
Tho' Christmas bids us cheer, repent, and weep
O'er resolutions we have failed to keep
To live for Christ before the year should go.
Why should we cling to sin, like ivy round
The stricken tree, while like the ivy grown
Around the Rock, the Chief, the Corner Stone,
We ought, and might have been the year thro' found.
Let us resolve again, and, with a tear
Of true repentance for our vows in past,
Pledge it in truth and earnestness to last,
And set a period to our false career—
Thank God, His promise is not ours to Him,
Or hope and Heaven might be an idle dream.



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